In the Claims

1-15 (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A system for notifying a computing device of an incoming message, the system comprising:

a message server coupled to a data communications network for receiving the incoming message;

a public communications system coupled to the message server, the message server for securely communicating to the communications system that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device; and

a communications line coupled to the communications system and to the computing device, the communications system for signaling the computing device over the communications line that the incoming message awaits retrieval by such computing device,

wherein the incoming message includes a destination address associated with the computing device, and wherein the communications line is identified by an identifier, the system further comprising a database associating the destination address with the identifier, the message server accessing the database and determining the identifier based on the destination address and communicating to the communications system that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device at the communications line as identified by the identifier,

wherein the communications system signals the computing device over the communications line by providing a recognizable dial tone signal that is different than a regular dial tone signal in response to the computing device periodically and automatically causing the communications line to be off-hook, wherein the communications system includes a secure server and wherein the message server utilizes an encryption method to communicate an encrypted SS7 message indicating that the incoming message awaits retrieval with the secure server of the communications system, the SS7 message including indicia identifying the computing device, via the communications tine coupled to the computing device, and wherein the encryption method is based on a security code corresponding to the communications line and wherein the security code is shared between the message server and a central office comprising the secure server in the communications system.

17-19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 16 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN), wherein the communications line is a telephone line, and wherein the identifier is a telephone number.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Original) The system of claim 16 wherein the message server is coupled to a data control network of the communications system.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN) which in turn includes at least a portion of an SS7 network, and wherein the message server is coupled to the SS7 network.

24. (Original) The system of claim 16 wherein the incoming message is an e-mail message and the message server is an e-mail server.

25. (Original) The system of claim! 6 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN).

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[26]] 16 wherein the communications line is a telephone line.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Original) The system of claim 16 wherein the message server is coupled to an Internet data communications network for receiving the incoming message.

30. (Previously Presented) A method for notifying a computing device of an incoming message, the method comprising:

receiving the incoming message at a message server coupled to a data communications network;

communicating to a communications system coupled to the message server that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device; and

signaling the computing device over a communications line coupled to the communications system and to the computing device that the incoming message awaits retrieval by such computing device,

wherein the incoming message includes a destination address associated with the computing device, and wherein the communications line is identified by an identifier, the method further comprising:

associating the destination address with the identifier in a database; and accessing, by the message server, the database to determine the identifier based on the destination address;

communicating to the communications system that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device at the communications line as identified by the identifier with the communicating to the communications system including use of encryption based on the identifier, the communications system signaling the computing device over the communications line by providing a recognizable dial tone different than a regular dial tone in response to the computing device causing the communication line to go off-hook, wherein the computing device periodically and automatically takes the communication line off-hook to detect the recognizable dial tone, wherein the communications system includes a secure server and wherein the message server utilizes an encryption method to communicate an encrypted SS7 message indicating that the incoming message awaits retrieval with the secure server of the communications system, the SS7 message including indicia identifying the computing device, via the communications line coupled to the computing device, and wherein the encryption method is based on a security code corresponding to the communications line and wherein the security code is shared between the message server and a central office comprising the secure server in the communications system.

31-33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN), wherein the communications line is a telephone line, and wherein the identifier is a telephone number, the method comprising:

associating the destination address with the telephone number in the database;

accessing, by the message server, the database to determine the telephone number based on the destination address; and

communicating to the communications system that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device at the communications line as identified by the telephone number.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Original) The method of' claim 30 comprising communicating to the communications system over a data control network thereof that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device.

37. (Original) The method of claim 36 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN) which in turn includes at least a portion of an SS7 network, the method comprising communicating to the PSTN over the SS7 network thereof that the incoming message awaits retrieved by the computing device.

38. (Original) The method of claim 30 wherein the incoming message is an e-mail message and the message server is an e-mail server, the method comprising:

receiving the incoming e-mail message at the e-mail server;

communicating to the communications system that the incoming e-mail message awaits retrieval by the computing device; and

signaling the computing device that the incoming e-mail message awaits retrieval by such computing device.

39. (Original) The method of claim 30 wherein the communications system includes at least a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN), the method comprising communicating to the PST'N that the incoming message awaits retrieval by the computing device.

40. (Cancelled)

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[40]] 30 wherein the communications line is a telephone line, the method comprising signaling the computing device over the telephone line that the incoming message awaits retrieval by such computing device.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Original) The method of claim 30 comprising receiving the incoming message at a message server coupled to an Internet data communications network.

44-47. (Canceled)